UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1993/AC.4/TM.3/1
14 June 1993

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH and SPANISH

RECONVENED TECHNICAL MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 46/128 and 47/75

Geneva, 14-16 July 1993

Note by the secretariat

Report of a Consultation between Representatives of Indigenous Peoples and International Development, Human Rights and Other Agencies, held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, on 11 December 1992 in conjunction with the ceremonies launching the International Year of the World's Indigenous People

1. The Consultation between Representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Development and Human Rights Agencies took place on 11 December 1992 at United Nations Headquarters. It was organized by the Centre for Human Rights and the International Labour Office (ILO) in cooperation with the NGO Committee on the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. Governments were invited to send observers and a number did so. Representatives of several non-governmental organizations having a particular interest in indigenous issues were also in attendance. Plenary sessions were held from 10.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and from 4.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. Direct bilateral discussions between indigenous and agency representatives took place between 2.30 and 4.30 p.m.

2. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Grace Smith of the Navajo Nation, Mr. Oren Lyons of the Onondaga Nation and Mr. Ian Chambers, ILO representative to the United Nations. With the agreement of the meeting, the co-chairpersons have prepared the present report and conclusions of the Consultation.

3. While it was recognized by both the organizers and participants that a one-day meeting was entirely insufficient to address all of the issues, the feeling was generally expressed at the end of the Consultation that it had been a useful exercise and that future meetings within the United Nations

system bringing together indigenous and agency representatives might wish to use it as a basis for further discussions both in terms of its conclusions and recommendations and with reference to its format. The possibility which the latter offered of following up specific issues in direct bilateral contacts was a feature particularly appreciated by many participants.

4. The following paragraphs set out the main issues of general purport raised and proposed actions or approaches to deal with them.

Issue No. 1. Access

5. One of the major problems for indigenous people in relation to intergovernmental development agencies is to have access to them in order to:

(a) Obtain information on their programmes;

(b) Provide information on the real situation of indigenous communities;

(c) Present proposals and suggestions for activities in favour of indigenous communities; and

(d) Contribute to the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programmes by foreseeing, measuring and describing their impact on indigenous peoples.

(a) Obtaining information

6. Although a fair number of publications exist explaining the aims, scope and procedures of the development programmes of the United Nations, its specialized agencies, the World Bank and regional development banks (Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and the new Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Development Fund, a great many indigenous leaders and representatives do not have easy access to these both because they are not physically available to them and because they are not published in languages that indigenous decision-makers understand.

7. To help address this problem, ILO is preparing a handbook, to be issued before the end of 1993, which is designed to provide at least basic information on the development bodies, policies and procedures available to indigenous people.

8. The Consultation considered it important also that each agency designate both at the headquarters and, where possible, local level, an official who could serve as a focal point for inquiries from indigenous representatives. Such officials should have responsibility not only for referring the indigenous inquiry to the right place but for following up to ensure that a reply is obtained within a reasonable time, because one of the present difficulties identified is the slowness of communications, especially from agency headquarters.

9. As regards indigenous focal points at the local level, they should receive written instructions from their headquarters regarding their obligations to assist indigenous people in obtaining information, and in countries where there is a significant indigenous population, they should familiarize themselves with at least the major indigenous language.

10. The Department of Public Information (DPI) of the United Nations and the United Nations information centres in different countries should take an active role in regard to channelling information on the United Nations system to indigenous people.

(b) Providing information

11. Several agency representatives referred to the difficulty they experience in obtaining information on the real situation of indigenous people. The best source of such information is clearly indigenous communities themselves and they should make increased efforts to ensure that such information is provided. In the course of the Consultation, a number of indigenous representatives passed in very informative publications and periodicals containing a great deal of information about the situation of their peoples. These should certainly be sent to the focal points in the various agencies at local and international levels. Technical assistance could perhaps be provided by some of the agencies to help train information officers amongst indigenous representatives.

12. More broadly, there is a clear need for more information on the indigenous peoples to be circulated at national, regional and international levels, both for adults and in school curricula. This question is dealt with at greater length under Issue No. 3 below.

(c) Presenting proposals

13. Since much of the framework of official development assistance is governmental, and since many of the governmental officials dealing with indigenous peoples have themselves very limited (if any) access to negotiations on development programmes, indigenous peoples often find it very difficult to get their programme and project proposals for financial and technical assistance into the development planning process.

14. In some cases, indigenous representatives can have direct access to agency representatives at the country level (e.g., UNICEF, ILO, the Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Development Fund) but in other cases, established procedures required by Governments or by the agencies themselves may impede such access.

15. One way to meet this difficulty would be to request United Nations resident coordinators to convene meetings of their development colleagues (which could, and should, also include representatives of bilateral assistance programmes) to discuss with indigenous representatives directly their needs and priorities. A special effort in this regard should be requested during the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and, because the Year is one declared by a General Assembly resolution, it may be easier than before to arrange such a dialogue. It has to be recognized that in certain countries

for political or other reasons, Government counterparts of development agencies may be reluctant for such meetings to take place but, in such cases, headquarters officials may be requested to encourage Governments to modify their position and, where appropriate, such meetings could be organized at the regional level to remove participants from the particular pressures of the national political scene.

16. In connection with this issue, the Consultation agreed that special attention needs to be paid to proposals from indigenous groups resident in developed countries in which most development agencies are not represented and for which they do not have assistance programmes. Although it is the responsibility of national Governments in such countries to provide for the needs of the entire population, including indigenous peoples, since they are presumed to have the financial means to do so, international development agencies may be able to help, for example, out of small project special funds. (The representative of the World Bank alluded to such a possibility.) Developed countries (like developing countries) which have ratified the ILO Conventions (Nos. 197 and 169) on indigenous and tribal populations are under certain obligations in international law with respect to such assistance and the ILO supervisory bodies can assist by drawing this obligation to the attention of Governments at the appropriate level.

(d) Programme and project design, implementation and evaluation

17. It is fundamental that indigenous peoples should democratically decide on their mode of development. Indigenous peoples should be able to make their views known on what kind of development projects are undertaken in their regard, how those projects and programmes affect them, how they can be improved and what their real impact has been. This is the case not only for operations specifically targeting indigenous peoples but also for more broadly designed projects and programmes (e.g., in rural development, infrastructure, economic adjustment and environment) which may have as much or more effect on them than "indigenous" projects.

18. One way in which this might be achieved is by means of the type of meeting described in paragraph 15 above. Also agencies could make efforts to provide in-project arrangements for the inclusion of indigenous representatives in planning, implementation and evaluation teams and discussions. At the local and international levels, panels of indigenous experts could be constituted to provide representatives for the evaluation of programmes. The representative of the World Bank informed the Consultation of his institution's intention to invite indigenous representatives to help assess the environmental impact of World Bank projects.

19. Whatever the level of participation or type of activity, however, the Consultation stressed the fundamental importance of the requirement that "indigenous representatives" must indeed be "representative". They must be chosen by the indigenous communities concerned in order to be their legitimate representatives. While others, usually drawn from the ranks of the dominant society or from the officials of governmental or non-governmental organizations, have fulfilled an important and appreciated advocacy role for indigenous peoples in the past, the time has now come for the indigenous to speak their own thought with their own voice directly and not through

intermediaries. There is a responsibility on agency officials dealing with indigenous issues to be sensitive to this matter and to ascertain the legitimacy and representativity of persons purporting to speak and act on behalf of indigenous peoples.

Issue No. 2. Training and capacity-building

20. While many agency representatives at the Consultation referred to the need and responsibility of their own organizations to become more knowledgeable of, and sensitive to, indigenous issues, it was readily recognized that indigenous representatives need to acquire greater knowledge of the possibilities, constraints, policies and procedures of the agencies themselves, which have a much wider mandate than indigenous issues.

21. To address this issue, long-term capacity-building programmes need to be envisaged. One method would be for the agencies, especially in their departments most relevant to indigenous concerns, to provide internships of two to six months, during which indigenous interns would work alongside their agency counterparts. This would not only provide a valuable training possibility for indigenous persons but also help to sensitize agencies to indigenous concerns. In addition to regular funding programmes for such training, Junior Professional Officer (JPO) and Associate Experts programmes could also be used for the purpose, providing opportunities for indigenous people of both developed and developing countries.

22. Another important element could be the use of indigenous experts from developed countries, who have expertise in law, economics, finance, project preparation and evaluation, to assist indigenous brothers and sisters in developing countries. While it is understood that there are as great differences and varieties in cultures, legal and political systems and development priorities amongst the indigenous peoples of the world as there are amongst other societies, the solidarity and sensitivity of indigenous experts would predispose them to be more sensitive to indigenous concerns elsewhere. A good example of this is the Trilateral Agreement elaborated by the Algonquins of Barrière Lake (Canada) in dealing with the social, economic and political consequences of a major infrastructural project proposal. The experience gained by the indigenous representatives in these negotiations could be of great assistance to other indigenous groups faced with similar situations.

23. The need for indigenous people to have access to specialized training in fields such as tourism, genetic engineering and demographics was also highlighted.

24. Attention was drawn to the financial implications of the suggestions set out above. Solutions do not seem too difficult to find. The small project funds administered by a number of institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank could be drawn on. The United Nations system itself has a variety of finances for training. Donor Governments committed to the aims of the International Year could also help in such training and exchange efforts. The Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Development Fund also seems an ideal vehicle for such activities. Imagination, good will

and a real commitment to contribute to the improvement of the situation of indigenous peoples worldwide can go a long way towards implementing these proposals.

Issue No 3. Ignorance of the indigenous situation

25. For a host of reasons, some international, some not, there is a pervasive ignorance throughout the world of indigenous cultures, history, institutions, perspectives, needs and aspirations. One of the major objectives of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People is to start to overcome this unfortunate situation. One year is not nearly enough but a start can be made and must then be sustained.

26. Especially in countries with large indigenous communities, but even in those having few or none, efforts must be increased to introduce indigenous culture into school curricula. All too often, indigenous society is depicted, if at all, as backward, marginal or folklorically quaint. It is important to portray indigenous societies for what they really are, dynamic and significant parts of national society, building on a different set of institutions, knowledge and traditions which have their legitimate place in the national culture. UNESCO and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations have a particular role to play in this regard while indigenous people themselves have an obligation to provide the knowledge and assistance to them so that there can be a much broader and more balanced dissemination of understanding of indigenous cultures.

27. But if there is widespread ignorance about the positive aspects of indigenous cultures, there is equally far-reaching ignorance about the more sombre realities of indigenous life - the discrimination, the human rights abuses, the economic, social and political marginalization which most indigenous societies endure. It is hoped that the occasion of the International Year will be used by the bodies and agencies of the United Nations system concerned with human rights, especially the Centre for Human Rights, UNICEF and ILO to draw the attention of the broader public to the fact that so many indigenous peoples in both developed and developing countries do not enjoy the human rights enshrined in United Nations and ILO instruments on the subject.

28. As part of the activities of the International Year, a number of meetings and conferences are also planned which should help to increase knowledge of indigenous realities. One such will take place in the Philippines from 11 to 19 April 1993, and another is planned for later in the year in Central and South America.

29. The feeling was expressed that there had been insufficient media coverage of the launching of the International Year. It was suggested that if the Secretary-General himself gave a press conference on indigenous issues, this would contribute to increasing media attention to them.

Issue No. 4. Development financing

30. Up to now, indigenous peoples have benefited very little in general from official development financing. They are frequently the most marginalized

groups within national societies. They are often also the poorest. Yet, with a few notable exceptions, in spite of the emphasis of many agencies' and institutions' programmes on poverty alleviation and the "poorest of the poor", the indigenous have been excluded, at best left to their own devices and at worst victims rather than beneficiaries of "development". In some cases, too, indigenous peoples have understandably shunned national, regional and local development programmes which threaten their identity, traditions and way of life.

31. As is the case with many marginalized groups, indigenous representatives dissatisfied, and usually quite rightly, with the performance in their regard of the Governments in the countries in which they live, turn to the United Nations. This sense that the United Nations should be more attentive to their concerns is heightened for many indigenous peoples because they, quite unlike other marginalized groups, consider themselves "peoples" or nations who should enjoy the right to self-determination which the United Nations recognizes as a right of all peoples.

32. Such issues are both so far-reaching and of such political complexity that they go beyond the scope and mandates of development agencies and institutions. They are being addressed in the framework of the Commission on Human Rights by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which is preparing the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. They must be alluded to, however, in the context of the Consultation because they provide not only an indispensable background to understanding the positions taken by many indigenous representatives but also influence strongly the problems of access to and influence over the provision of development assistance.

33. Forced to compete with other groups, often more numerous and influential than themselves, indigenous peoples have little chance of gaining greater access to development financing in present conditions. It was in recognition of this fact that the Latin American and Caribbean Indigenous Development Fund was established, not only to facilitate financing for indigenous programmes in that region but to give indigenous peoples an equal voice with Governments in determining the uses and priorities of the funds available. Other regions may wish to envisage similar initiatives.

34. By analogy with UNIFEM, the United Nations development fund for women, a specially dedicated United Nations development fund for indigenous peoples could be envisaged, but the experience with the low level of contributions to the existing voluntary fund for activities for the International Year of the World's Indigenous People is scarcely encouraging.

35. It is not the secretariats of the international governmental organizations which determine the use of the funds at their disposal. Such decisions are the right and prerogative of the Governments which form them. The best the secretariats can do is to draw attention to the situation of indigenous peoples and encourage greater sensitivity and commitment to their cause. The agency representatives who participated in the Consultation are committed to doing so.

Issue No. 5. Relevance of the Consultation

36. Throughout this Consultation various proposals and suggestions have been made as to how to address concretely and with some hope of success at least some of the problems faced by indigenous peoples and the agencies in their interactions. The Consultation discussed the question of how these proposals and suggestions could be fed into the development system both during the International Year and subsequently.

37. It was decided that the report and conclusions of the Consultation should be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the executive heads of the programmes, agencies and institutions represented with the request that they consider them and take appropriate action.

38. It was decided that the report and conclusions should be transmitted to the next Technical Meeting on the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, to be held in Geneva in July 1993.

39. It was decided that the report and conclusions should be sent to participants and Governments of the States Members of the United Nations.

40. It was decided that at the meeting to mark the end and to evaluate the impact of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, and at any similar meetings at the national and regional levels, the extent to which the proposals herein contained have been put into operation should be examined.

41. There was unanimous agreement that the attention of the United Nations system and others to the situation of the world's indigenous peoples must not end with the International Year. The latter can and must only constitute a beginning. With respect to longer-term arrangements, the following suggestions were made:

(a) To continue and expand the valuable reports begun by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations on the situation of the world's indigenous;

(b) To establish a United Nations office for indigenous peoples;

(c) To institute annual meetings at an appropriate level to review the fate of proposals for development projects submitted by indigenous people to explain why they were accepted or rejected and what progress has been achieved.

Other issues

42. Certain other issues were raised towards the end of the Consultation. For want of time, they could not be discussed. They are nevertheless important and for that reason listed below:

(a) Specific efforts should be made to explain to indigenous people their rights under international instruments, agreements and treaties. The particular example of intellectual property was mentioned;

(b) There should be greater recognition of indigenous intellectual achievements such as appropriate technologies in infrastructure, agriculture, agronomy and ecology, and this knowledge and its repositories should be brought into the mainstream of development;

(c) A special effort should be made during the International Year of the World's Indigenous People to secure the release of indigenous prisoners of conscience.

Acknowledgements

43. The organizers of the Consultation wish to thank most warmly the representatives of the programmes, agencies and institutions both for their very helpful participation in the meeting and for the useful background information notes which they provided. They also address particular thanks to the indigenous representatives for the efforts they made in preparing for the meeting and for the patience and consideration they displayed which enabled a maximum number of participants to intervene. Finally, a special expression of gratitude must be conveyed through the Secretary-General to his colleagues in the security and interpretation services who, in spite of the worst winter storm New York had experienced in many years, remained for the full extent of the meeting even though the essential services in the building had been shut down and the rest of the staff sent home.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1993/AC.4/TM.3/2
8 June 1993

Original: ENGLISH

RECONVENED TECHNICAL MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 46/128 AND 47/75

Geneva, 14-16 July 1993

Note by the Secretariat

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Introduction	1 - 8	2
OPENING CEREMONIES IN NEW YORK AND OTHER CEREMONIES	9 - 13	3
ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS	14 - 21	3
THE VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	22 - 29	4
INTERAGENCY COOPERATION	30 - 32	6
CONSULTATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN NEW YORK ON 11 DECEMBER 1992	33	6
PUBLIC AWARENESS MATERIALS	34 - 35	7
GOODWILL AMBASSADOR	36	7
STAFFING	37	7
OUTCOME/PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE	38 - 48	7

GE.93-14052 (E)

Introduction

1. The International Year of the World's Indigenous People was proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/164 of 18 December 1990. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/128 of 17 December 1991, appointed the then Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights as Coordinator of the Year and assigned responsibility for implementing the activities of the Year to the Centre for Human Rights in conjunction with the International Labour Organisation. In resolution 46/128 the General Assembly also adopted the theme "Indigenous people - a new partnership", adopted a programme of activities contained in the annex to that resolution, and decided that the Coordinator should convene a technical meeting early in 1992.

2. Planning for the year is also guided by resolution 1991/57 of the Commission on Human Rights, resolutions 1990/29 and 1991/33 of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the subject of Year (A/46/543).

3. The first Technical Meeting of agencies, regional commissions and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system with representatives of States, organizations of indigenous peoples and other non-governmental organizations having a special interest in indigenous matters was held at Geneva from 9 to 11 March 1992.

4. As that meeting was poorly attended by representatives of indigenous organizations and other relevant non-governmental organizations, it was recommended that the Technical Meeting should be reconvened. The reconvened meeting was held from 3 to 5 August 1992, immediately following the tenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, to take advantage of the presence in Geneva of the delegates to the Working Group.

5. At the reconvened Technical Meeting indigenous representatives requested the appointment of two vice-chairpersons. Mr. Michael Dodson (Northern Land Council, Australia) and Ms. Rigoberta Menchu (International Indian Treaty Council) were elected vice-chairpersons by the indigenous delegates.

6. In its resolution 47/75 of 14 December 1992, the General Assembly requested the Coordinator to reconvene the Technical Meeting for a third time, with a view to its concluding its deliberations and finalizing the report on the outcome of the three meetings. This third Technical Meeting will consider the progress already made and plan strategies for the future beyond 1993.

7. The purposes of the Year are to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous communities in areas such as human rights, the environment, development, education and health and to raise public awareness of indigenous cultures through special international and national activities as set out in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/128. These purposes are to be achieved through enhancing the participation of indigenous people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects affecting them.

8. Delegates at the previous two meetings made the point that not only should the short-term goals for 1993 be considered, but that there was also a need to work towards goals which would bring long-term benefit to indigenous peoples beyond the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. It is expected that indigenous delegates to this third Technical Meeting will wish to consider a number of long-term goals, and the mechanisms by which they may be achieved.

OPENING CEREMONIES IN NEW YORK AND OTHER CEREMONIES

9. The official opening ceremonies for the Year were held in New York, on 10 December 1992. During the opening ceremonies, 20 indigenous speakers made statements about the situation of indigenous peoples and their relationship with the world. However, this part constituted a special meeting of the General Assembly as the rules of the Assembly allow only for representatives of Governments to speak. The formal meeting was suspended to enable the indigenous persons to speak and their statements do not form part of the official record.

10. The importance of giving indigenous peoples a formal place within the international framework of the United Nations was highlighted on this occasion. The question of participation is a matter which indigenous peoples may wish to address at the reconvened Technical Meeting.

11. The opening ceremonies in the General Assembly were followed by a cultural event with indigenous entertainers and a reception.

12. The Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-ninth session, included an item on its agenda entitled "Commemoration of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People". Ms. Rigoberta Menchu in her capacity as Goodwill Ambassador for the International Year was invited to address the Commission. Twelve indigenous people also spoke under the item.

13. An item commemorating the International Year was included in the agenda of the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, and the Goodwill Ambassador and eight indigenous people were invited to address the Conference.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

14. A number of activities have been initiated by the Centre for Human Rights, including the preparation of a world calendar of events, a newsletter, the publication of a world map indicating where indigenous peoples live, and the preparation of a number of books for publication: an international directory of indigenous organizations, a collection of extracts from speeches given at the United Nations by indigenous delegates over the past 10 years, and a manual on internal self-government.

15. The secretariat has been contacting indigenous groups for information about local activities to include in the world calendar of events, and has received a pleasing response to its requests. The secretariat has also received considerable information concerning comprehensive national programmes

and public information activities. The highlights of those programmes are included in the calendar. An updated version of the calendar is available.

16. The newsletter has been prepared and it is hoped to publish it in English and Spanish during 1993. It will contain information about activities being undertaken by the United Nations, Governments and non-governmental organizations, as well as information about indigenous activities worldwide.

17. The international directory of indigenous organizations will contain up-to-date information about indigenous organizations throughout the world and will be an important communications and reference tool not only for indigenous peoples but for Governments and United Nations bodies.

18. The first draft of the book containing extracts of speeches has been completed and indigenous groups have been contacted for permission to quote from their statements.

19. In consultation with the International Labour Office, the Centre for Human Rights has engaged a consultant to prepare a manual on indigenous peoples and self-government. Centre staff are working closely with the consultant in researching and compiling the materials. This project is a direct response to the recommendation by indigenous peoples for the publication of such a manual. The recommendation was made at the conference concerning indigenous peoples and self-government held at Nuuk, Greenland, in September 1991, (see the report of the Meeting of Experts to review the experience of countries in the operation of schemes of internal self-government for indigenous peoples, E/CN.4/1992/42 and Add.1). The Centre acknowledges the generosity of the Danish Government in providing funding for this exercise.

20. The Centre has been successful in attracting sponsorship from the private sector for the publication of an educational resource to be used in schools. This resource is in the form of a wall chart with interesting information about indigenous peoples, superimposed upon a map of the world indicating generally where they live. Interested groups or Governments may use the art work, and adapt the text to regional requirements. Translations into local languages is encouraged.

21. There has been a great deal of interest in the Year from the general public, universities and other institutions. The secretariat has received many invitations to speak to groups about indigenous affairs and many requests for interviews from the media. The indigenous staff, in particular, are endeavouring to accept as many of these engagements as possible. Ensuring the dissemination of accurate information about indigenous peoples, their circumstances and their causes, is a secretariat priority.

THE VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

22. As is the usual practice for international years, the Secretary-General established the Voluntary Fund for the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and appealed to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for contributions. A target of US$ 500,000 was

set, with the intention of distributing the funds to small-scale practical projects of direct benefit to indigenous peoples, located mainly in developing countries. The projects are expected to encourage self-development by ensuring that they are planned, implemented and evaluated by indigenous peoples and be specifically designed to promote the objectives of the Year.

23. Overall, the governmental response to the Fund has been disappointing. Although three Governments have assisted the United Nations with staff and resources, and several have supported specific projects, these contributions are not associated with the Voluntary Fund. The majority of Governments have been slow to contribute to the Fund itself. On 4 May 1993, a further appeal was sent by the Coordinator to Governments requesting them to contribute. As of 31 May 1993, less than US$ 200,000 has been made available for projects, whilst the Fund has attracted project proposals valued in excess of US$ 13 million.

24. The first meeting to consider project proposals was held on 10 March 1993 to examine the 102 submissions, valued at US$ 6.4 million, received up to 28 February 1993. At that date, only $83,853 was available in the Fund for distribution to projects and only six projects, each under US$ 15,000 were recommended to the Coordinator.

25. The next meeting to consider projects will be held in August 1993. It is hoped that further contributions from Governments will have been received by that date.

26. Because of the limited funds available and to ensure that as many grants as possible may be made, it was recommended that grants should not exceed $15,000, and that no more than one project should be supported in each country. Projects were also considered against a set of guidelines which took into account such issues as the equity of distribution regionally, the major focus of projects, and the vulnerability of target groups as beneficiaries.

27. It was expected that projects would focus on one of the six categories of activities identified at the Technical Meeting held in March 1992, namely human rights, development and environment, education and culture, health, self-management and self-government, or public events and information.

28. As a means of assisting indigenous people who have submitted projects to the Fund, the secretariat has sought to involve Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in other ways. It is preparing a portfolio of projects from those received from indigenous peoples, and this will be available upon request to interested governments, private foundations and non-governmental organizations to consider whether assistance might be given more directly, through bilateral or other aid programmes. The secretariat is also following up interests in the private sector which might consider adopting projects during 1993. There are many imaginative ways that both Governments and the private sector might explore to find new ways to assist, through working directly with the communities involved.

29. The Coordinator and the secretariat for the Year, continue to urge governments to contribute to the Voluntary Fund.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

30. Indigenous people have made the point that the United Nations system, and all bodies, governmental or other, should ensure that indigenous peoples be treated as equal partners in dignity and mutual respect in all matters concerning them. In particular, it has been stressed that indigenous peoples should participate in the planning, management, execution and evaluation of projects to be carried out in the International Year. A number of initiatives have been taken to encourage the United Nations agencies to meet with indigenous peoples and develop programmes for their benefit. The Centre for Human Rights has been instrumental in organizing various meetings between the agencies and indigenous peoples.

31. Both previous Technical Meetings emphasized the need for action by the United Nations system as a whole. Many of the United Nations organizations and specialized agencies have thus appointed focal points for the International Year and are developing special activities and programmes relating to indigenous peoples during 1993. The Centre, in consultation with these organizations will be providing accessible and concise information about these programmes to indigenous peoples and communities so that they can take advantage of the opportunities they offer. The International Labour Organisation, the partner organization with the Centre for Human Rights in the coordination of the International Year, has taken several initiatives in this regard, facilitating informal contacts among the various concerned organizations.

32. Both UNICEF and the UNDP, two of the largest international organizations in the field, have established focal points and are developing informal links with indigenous people directly. The International Labour Organisation has held several consultations with indigenous people in connection with its Convention 169 and to consider future technical assistance. The World Bank has assisted a number of indigenous communities through its small grants scheme. An indigenous member of the secretariat was invited to address the World Health Assembly on behalf of the Coordinator for the International Year. It was recommended that the World Health Organization establish an advisory task force of indigenous health specialists to consider what activities it might undertake in the future. A consultation with indigenous peoples of the Arctic region is planned to be held in Siberia in early September 1993.

CONSULTATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN NEW YORK ON 11 DECEMBER 1992

33. The International Labour Organisation, together with the Coordinator, convened a one-day meeting on 11 December 1992 for an exchange of views between United Nations agencies and representatives of the indigenous peoples present in New York for the opening ceremonies of the Year. (See E/CN.4/Sub.2/1993/AC.4/TM.3/1). Representatives of 12 United Nations agencies attended this meeting with the representatives of indigenous communities, and it was an important contribution to the establishment of links between them. Important information concerning access to the agencies and about their programmes was provided to the indigenous representatives. The meeting had important implications for the future development of dialogue between indigenous communities and relevant United Nations agencies.

PUBLIC AWARENESS MATERIALS

34. A number of information activities are being undertaken for the International Year. A range of public information materials, including a poster, brochures, fact sheets and a press kit containing information sheets on indigenous peoples and the issues facing them in the world today, have been produced and are available for worldwide distribution. The Department of Public Information of the United Nations has been instrumental in preparing this comprehensive range of public awareness materials for the Year, in consultation with the Centre for Human Rights. These materials are available in all the official languages through the United Nations local offices and the International Year secretariat at Geneva. The secretariat has sent over 1,000 posters to indigenous peoples' and non-governmental organizations.

35. A video showing highlights of the opening ceremonies has been prepared.

GOODWILL AMBASSADOR

36. The 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Rigoberta Menchu, from Guatemala, has agreed to be the Goodwill Ambassador for the year, to draw world attention to the Year and to the situation of indigenous peoples. It is expected that she will undertake a programme of visits to several countries specifically to highlight the Year. The purpose of these visits will be to inform people about the International Year and the opportunities it offers.

STAFFING

37. The Centre for Human Rights, which has the responsibility for the administration of the Year, has sought to employ indigenous staff. The Governments of Australia, Denmark and Norway have supported the secondment of indigenous staff to the secretariat, for the Year, which is located at Geneva. This small team is fully involved in all the projects being developed for the Year by the Centre, and in the general administration of the Year's activities. A practical programme of activities has been developed and the indigenous staff are available to advise all sectors of the United Nations on matters relating to the International Year.

OUTCOME/PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

38. Indigenous peoples are anxious to see some positive outcome from this Year. The theme is "a new partnership", and indigenous peoples have expressed the hope that the United Nations system will be committed to ensuring that there is a genuine recognition of the concerns of indigenous peoples. It was suggested that a significant outcome of the Year could be a move towards the building of a new and meaningful relationship between indigenous peoples and the United Nations.

39. Indigenous leaders have requested that events and projects specifically directed towards the celebration of the Year should be meaningful, and not just window-dressing focusing on indigenous folklore. Activities that reinforce the popular "folkloric" images that surround indigenous peoples should be avoided at all costs. There is a strong consensus that the year should support the priorities identified by indigenous peoples.

40. Many indigenous representatives have proposed the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples with official recognition within the United Nations system. Indigenous people could use such a forum to debate concerns freely and to respond to international issues in an atmosphere of equality and mutual respect. Such a forum would need to be supported by a permanent functional secretariat within the United Nations.

41. It is essential that activities and projects for the Year should aim to have an impact over many years. There are many issues common to indigenous people such as displacement from their lands, loss of property rights, and lack of respect for their cultures and the contributions that they have made to the world.

42. In this regard it may be noted that indigenous peoples have organized three satellite meetings of the World Conference on Human Rights. A meeting bringing together indigenous people of North America was held in Ottawa in April 1993. In May, a meeting was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, including indigenous people from 12 countries in Asia. In the same month, a meeting was held in Guatemala, under the auspices of the Goodwill Ambassador, of indigenous people from the Americas. A number of suggestions for long-term activities emerged from these meetings.

43. The recommendations of these meetings included the following: the establishment of a permanent institution or forum for indigenous peoples' concerns to be discussed; easier access for indigenous peoples to United Nations meetings; and the creation of an international body to assist with the settlement of disputes between indigenous peoples and States. Both the Guatemala and the Thailand meetings, as well as the NGO Committee on the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, have suggested that the United Nations proclaim a decade of the world's indigenous peoples. Linked to this idea is the suggestion that a medium-term programme be developed within the United Nations system.

44. Governments have been encouraged to support initiatives to ensure a high profile for the International Year. At the two technical meetings already held to discuss activities for the Year, Governments were urged to keep in mind that the main purposes of the Year are to further international cooperation between States and intergovernmental bodies to solve problems faced by indigenous peoples, to increase the participation of indigenous peoples in the development of projects and policies affecting them, and generally to raise the awareness of the public about indigenous people.

45. The International Year of the World's Indigenous People will end on 31 December 1993. It is important to note that what can be achieved in concrete terms in such a short time is limited. However, it is realistic to expect that the world community will be more aware of the circumstances of indigenous peoples, and will be willing to continue the dialogue that has commenced.

46. 1993 provides an opportunity to improve the information about human rights available to indigenous people, especially in their own languages, and to make special arrangements for training courses in countries and regions

where indigenous people live. The World Conference on Human Rights, being held at Vienna in June 1993, also gives an opportunity for debate on indigenous issues.

47. The International Year should be seen as the beginning of a process of guaranteeing full human rights to indigenous peoples, and of greatly increasing and improving the resources for the development of indigenous peoples.

48. It is hoped that this Technical Meeting will provide the United Nations with a plan of action for the future that will aim to ensure indigenous people a permanent forum and defined rights of participation in United Nations forums where matters affecting them are discussed.